

TL-1 – Develop and Implement Aggressive Mass Transit Strategy

Benefit/Cost of Reducing CO₂e:

New Mexico: 13.4 MMt between 2007-2020; 1.3% of 2020 emissions; \$0 cost or net savings

N. Carolina: 31.3 MMt between 2007-2020; 1.1% of 2020 emissions; \$0 cost or net savings

Assessment: High Priority. Bin B. 19 out of 22 votes.

This policy option has the potential to significantly reduce GHG emissions and provide important co-benefits, but will require a concerted, long-term effort to implement.

Mass transit is included in long-range planning for the Wasatch Front. However the plans should be more aggressive and need to be fully-integrated and supported with adequate funding. Transit also offers important co-benefits such as improving air quality and congestion mitigation. Public support of the 2006 transit initiatives was high.

This is a long-term strategy needs to be developed in conjunction with quality growth land-use planning principles. To ensure success, mass transit options need to be convenient, reliable, and affordable. The strategy should consider the following program options:

- Methods for expanding government programs such as the UTA Eco-pass
- Educating the general public about transit options
- State and local incentives for increased utilization of mass transit.
- Optimized fares and enhanced subsidies are needed to encourage an optimal ridership rate; a detailed analysis should be undertaken to determine the optimum rates for daily fare and monthly passes.²
- The State could assist with obtaining rights-of-way, park and ride lots, and traffic signal priority.
- Options that compliment mass transit, including shared ownership vehicles (e.g. Zipcars/Freedom cars), bike carriers, and pedestrian-friendly city planning, should be evaluated in long range plans.

² Current fare rates can create barriers to transit ridership. For example, it costs \$12.00 for a family of four to take a round trip downtown by bus, remaining cheaper to drive an automobile. Approximately 16 percent of UTA operating expenses come from passengers fares.